



## Why we believe in Multi-Ethnic Ministry

In the spring of 1987 I received a phone call that changed the course of my life. On the other end of the phone was an energetic African-American church-planting pastor talking about a church that had been planted (and was growing!) on Chicago's west side. At that time the Rock Church was 70% black and 30% white; furthermore, this mixed group of believers was "on the ground" preaching and practicing the gospel. By the time the conversation ended I was intrigued enough to want to see firsthand what was going on in the Austin community of Chicago.

Now, after nearly 23 years of ministry in Chicago I find myself in my third multi-ethnic church. As with the other two congregations, not everyone looks like me. At Holy Trinity Church, my wife and I are among the minority. At times we are challenged; that goes with the territory but we are committed because we share our lives with likeminded believers who are dedicated to multi-ethnic ministry in this city.

Why are we and other HTC leaders so inclined? More space and more time are needed for more comprehensive answers. For now, allow me to simply bullet-point "Four Reasons Why We Believe in Multi-Ethnic Ministry at HTC."

- ***Obedience to the Great Commission assumes it.*** Our Lord commanded His disciples to make disciples of the nations (Matthew 28:19). John's vision of the end of human history (Revelation 7:9) assures us that Jesus' disciples of Jesus took His command seriously. At HTC, we want to do our part in populating heaven with peoples from the people groups of the world, many of whom have come to our city.
- ***Our context requires it.*** Given the racial/ethnic makeup of Chicago, our founding pastors determined some years ago that to reach the city we needed a pastoral team that reflected the diversity of the city. The vision of HTC is "To see the city of Chicago transformed by the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." For Christ's church to be the church in this city, multi-ethnic ministry is not optional.
- ***Our Lord's work is foundational for it.*** The work of the Lord Jesus is the theological groundwork for what we are seeking to do. His work on the cross was foundational for reconciling people to God and with each other. *In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit* (Ephesians 2:22). Our desire is that our congregations would visualize this reality.
- ***Our experience confirms it.*** Our quest to be a church for people of various ethnic and racial backgrounds has not been easy. It's slow, hard work! Nevertheless it is happening right before our eyes. On any given Sunday at HTC, you will likely see people who are not of your race or ethnic background. And, that's the way we want it!

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Find original article at <http://www.htcchicago.org/holy-trinity-church-blog/why-we-believe-in-multi-ethnic-ministry/>